

## Living Shadow 188

### Chapter 188 Standing With Justice

The crowd of Imperial Academy students rushed in, weapons in hand. They moved quickly, forming a loose battle formation as they approached. Damon spotted various races among them—beastkin, elves, even a few fae's—but the one leading them stood out the most. A fae, his large brown angelic wings spread wide, hovered slightly above the others, bow in hand, radiating battle readiness.

"You," the fae's voice rang out, firm and accusing. "Are you the one from Aether Academy causing trouble on our turf?"

Damon chuckled.

"Your turf?" He crossed his arms.

"This is the capital city. I don't recall the your name being part of the Imperial Family... unless, of course, you're secretly plotting to claim ownership of imperial land? Treasonous thoughts, perhaps?"

The young man's face twisted in anger.

"That's not what—"

Damon raised two fingers in a gun-like gesture.

"Shut up," he cut in smoothly. "You dare insult the Imperial Family? I must exact justice."

Bang! Bang! Bang! Bang!

Before they could react, magic bullets burst forth from his fingers. In an instant, six of the fifteen attackers were down, caught off guard and wounded.

The crowd gasped. Some of the bystanders murmured among themselves, already spreading exaggerated versions of the events. By invoking the Imperial Family's name, Damon had effectively twisted the narrative, placing himself on the moral high ground. Now, the Imperial Academy students weren't just fighting an Aether Academy student—they were disrespecting the Empire itself.

And rumors had a way of growing wilder with every retelling.

"Attack! Attack him now!" someone yelled.

"Wait!"

Damon's voice cut through the noise. Surprisingly, they hesitated, which in his mind was utter foolishness—especially since he had struck first.

The fae leader narrowed his eyes. "What is it, Aether Academy student?"

Damon smirked.

"The name's Damon Grey." He straightened, his tone almost casual.

"And I think this fight is unfair. The odds aren't exactly favorable, are they? You're all mostly armed, and there are fifteen of you against just one of me."

The fae's gaze flicked toward the four groaning figures on the pavement—the ones Damon had already beaten down.

"You want to fight one-on-one?" he asked cautiously.

Damon sneered.

"Against you? Don't flatter yourselves."

He reached into his pocket, pulling out a black blindfold—the same one he always kept with him. Without hesitation, he tied it over his eyes, completely obscuring his vision.

The crowd buzzed with excitement.

"I'm giving you all a handicap," Damon announced.

"Otherwise, this could be considered bullying. And at Aether Academy, we hate bullying the weak."

The Imperial Academy students bristled, their expressions shifting from anger to outright fury. Damon could practically hear their teeth grinding.

Of course, he wasn't actually giving them a handicap. Night had already fallen, and with the dim streetlights and the sheer number of opponents, this was his domain. The shadows stretched long across the pavement, and with so many people moving at once, he needed to sharpen his shadow perception. By eliminating his sense of sight, he could focus entirely on tracking movement, reading attacks, and using his spatial awareness to its fullest potential.

And if it also humiliated his opponents in front of a live audience?

Well. That was just an added bonus.

Damon raised his hand. Another magic bullet fired.

Bang!

It struck its mark, sending another opponent crashing to the ground.

His smirk widened beneath the blindfold.

Dead Eye still worked with Shadow Perception.

"Beat him now!" someone roared.

And the real fight began.

The earth beneath Damon's feet rumbled as jagged spikes shot up from the ground. He had already sensed the attack through Shadow Perception, so he dodged at the last second, triggering Beholder's Gaze. Time slowed.

He weaved through incoming magical attacks, flipping out of the way of a water blast before landing. Another earth spike surged up beneath him—he twisted his waist mid-air, rotated at the last moment, and just before his fingers brushed the ground, he fired a magic bullet straight at the earth magic user.

Bang!

The spell struck true, sending the attacker stumbling backward.

Damon smirked. He tilted his head slightly, narrowly avoiding a fist aimed at the back of his skull.

"Wind magic, huh?" He turned sharply, catching the attacker's arm and twisting it over his shoulder.  
"Too slow."

He didn't know if they were stupid or just arrogant but none of them were using barrier magic to stop his magic bullets.

If this was in the Aether Academy they would have done already.

With a sharp pull, he spun the unfortunate student around, using him as a human shield against his allies' incoming attacks.

Boom! A fireball exploded against the student's back, sending him crashing to the ground, smoke rising from his uniform.

Damon scoffed.

"Don't they teach you guys coordination at the Imperial Academy? They sure do where I come from."

He flung the bloodied student aside. The remaining Imperial Academy students hesitated, their expressions wavering with fear.

"Don't give up yet!" the fae leader shouted. "He's just one man! Our academy's reputation is on the line!"

Spreading his wings, the fae took to the air, his bow already nocked with an arrow.

"Attack him! I'll provide cover fire!"

Flames ignited around his arrow as he fired. Damon dodged effortlessly, though he had sensed the attack coming. He could have caught it—there was no doubt the crowd would have found that impressive—but realistically, an arrow moving that fast, charged with magic? That was asking for unnecessary injury.

Instead, he raised his fingers and fired several magic bullets in response.

Bang! Bang! Bang!

His fingers burned slightly from the recoil.

"Ahh... looks like I've hit my limit," he muttered. He needed to let his hands cool for a moment, or he might risk hurting himself.

Still, there were seven more to go.

Damon charged at them. Using Parkour, he sprang off the ground and landed on the shoulders of another wind user. Before the student could react, Damon activated Shadow Armor under his arm, using the darkness from his own uniform, and smashed his fist into the student's face. The impact sent the wind user crumpling.

From his perch, Damon leaped onto a nearby streetlamp, then launched himself toward a building's side, grabbing a window ledge. He didn't stop. Raising his hand, he fired his Omnidirectional Gear, the hooked wire pulling him up. In a flash, he landed right next to the airborne fae.

The fae's eyes widened.

"Wha—what—"

Damon kicked him mid-sentence. The fae gasped, his wings faltering as they both plummeted toward the ground.

Before they hit, Damon unleashed a barrage of magic bullets at point-blank range. The fae coughed blood, his consciousness slipping.

The watching crowd gasped. The sheer insanity of the maneuver had left them stunned.

Then, just before impact, Damon kicked off the fae's chest and fired his Omnidirectional Gear again, pulling himself to the side of a wall. He landed smoothly—right on top of the now unconscious fae.

Silence.

The remaining students froze in horror. Their strongest fighter had been obliterated.

Damon straightened, rolling his shoulders.

"Tch... That was disappointing."

His piercing gaze snapped toward the rest of the group. They were still stunned, overwhelmed by fear. Without hesitation, Damon moved. In mere moments, he cut through them like a blade through paper. Their morale had shattered—and in their hesitation, they were knocked out one by one.

When the last student fell, Damon sighed.

"That was easy. Let's go," he said, turning to Lilith.

She smirked, but her gaze flickered toward something else.

Damon exhaled. He had already sensed the new presence.

Another shadow.

His eyes shifted toward the approaching figure. A young man with a sword resting on his shoulder and a katana strapped to his waist. His hair was a deep purple, well-kept, and his imperial uniform was pristine. But it wasn't his appearance that stood out—it was his gait.

This one...

This one was dangerous.

Every step exuded calm confidence. No wasted movement. No fear.

A swordsman. A real one.

Damon narrowed his eyes.

The young man stopped a few paces away, his cold, calculating gaze locked onto Damon. Then, he spoke.

"I am Yuka von Penrose... of the Imperial Academy."